Movie Magic: 20 big Themes
Space, Action & Romance

BIG ORCHESTRAS & DIGITAL SOUND !

Conducted by Stanley Black

Star Wars • Empire Strikes Back
633 Squadron • Guns of Navarone
James Bond Themes • Raiders of the Lost Ark
Somewhere in Time • The Deer Hunter
The Great Escape • Chi Mai • Bilitis
Theme from Superman • Carousel Waltz
Bridge on the River Kwai • Gigi • Laura
Magnificent Seven • The Big Country
Thunderbirds • Breakfast at Tiffany's
alto
Take:2

Had the British music industry ever presented an award for versatility, then Stanley Black would have been a worthy recipient. The sheer range of music he was involved with over a lengthy career was extraordinary. One great speciality was film music and that aspect of his expertise is the focus of this collection.

Born in the east end of London in 1913, Stanley Black took piano lessons at the age of seven and only five years later had a composition played on BBC radio. Early success continued when, at fifteen, he won a competition for arrangers sponsored by the *Melody Maker*. Still in his teens, he worked with a number of prominent musicians including bandleaders Lew Stone, Maurice Winnick and Teddy Joyce, then, in 1936, joined Harry Roy's band. Black's reputation had grown to the extent that he broadcast and recorded with the great American saxophonist Coleman Hawkins during the time the jazz giant was in Europe in the thirties. It was a marvellous accolade for such a young musician.

When war broke out Stanley Black joined the RAF utilising his knowledge of the music business by managing entertainment for servicemen based in the Midlands. Discharged from the forces on health grounds he re-joined Harry Roy, before, in 1942 working as conductor, pianist and arranger for Anne Shelton's radio series *Introducing Anne*. In 1944 he joined Decca Records as house arranger and conductor, working with the company's stars including Vera Lynn.

Between 1944 and 1952 Black was conductor of the BBC Dance Orchestra, making more than 4,000 broadcasts with the band including comedy shows such as *Hi Gang!, Much Binding in the Marsh* and *Ray's a Laugh*. He also fronted his own shows displaying a mastery of Latin American music in which he had developed an interest during a tour to South America in the 1930's with Harry Roy. From the late 1940's onwards, Black became involved with film music. After writing the score for *It Always Rains on Sunday* he worked on more than eighty films composer or musical director. By now firmly established as one of the top names in British popular music, Stanley Black and his BBC orchestra appeared at the 1951 Royal Variety show. He recorded prolifically for Decca through into the stereo era.

When dance bands lost popularity, Stanley Black underwent a change of emphasis in his working life, concentrating more on light and classical music. To one journalist who expressed surprise at this, Black retorted that 'serious music needn't be pompous. West Side Story should be in the same programme as Beethoven'. Surely a template for Classic FM!

As with all his other endeavours, Black made a success of his 'new' musical career eventually becoming musical director of the BBC Northern Ireland Orchestra. His extraordinary career was recognised officially in 1985 when he was awarded an OBE. Stanley Black continued to work into his eighties and as late as 1994 he performed at the Albert Hall in the Gala celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of D-Day. He died in 2002 at the age of 89. He had enjoyed a most eventful life and had given enormous pleasure to countless millions of music lovers.

Now to our programme. In recent years, John Williams has been the pre-eminent composer of music for the cinema and his work naturally looms large here. His theme for the rumbustious 1981 Steven Spielberg adventure blockbuster *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, which took an extraordinary $389,000,000 at the box office, is typical of his grand, stirring style. *Superman* is similar musically, but of all the Williams movies it is surely *Star Wars* (and sequel *Empire Strikes back*) that were the most-popular with box office takings nearly double those even of *Raiders*' mind-boggling figures. Although not by John Williams, Barry Gray's theme music for *Thunderbirds* is very much of the same school. Based on the famous Sci-fi puppet TV series the 2004 movie was another major box office success.

Now staple bank holiday fare on UK Television, John Sturges' 1963 movie *The Great Escape* was the archetypal POW escape story. A thrilling drama with a starry cast including Steve McQueen, James Garner, Richard Attenborough, Charles Bronson and James Coburn, the memorable theme was composed by another doyen of American movie music, Elmer Bernstein. A great adventure film *The Guns of Navarone*, adapted from Alastair Maclean's novel tells the tale of a British military team sent to cross occupied Greek territory in an attempt to destroy the massive German gun installation commanding a key sea channel. Produced by Carl Foreman, it starred Gregory Peck, David Niven and Anthony Quinn; the music was by Dimitri Tiomkin. David Lean's epic, multi-Oscar-winning *The Bridge on the River Kwai* was distinguished by the performance of Alec Guinness as the chief British officer and the use of the 1914 march *Colonel Bogey* composed by Kenneth J. Alford as the main theme. The reminder of the music was by Malcolm Arnold. Another British war film, *633 Squadron* (1964) boasted a memorable theme by England-born Ron Goodwin whose other credits included the films *Where Eagles Dare, Battle of Britain*, *Monte Carlo or Bust*, and *Those Magnificent Men in their Flying Machines*. Although a war film, Michael Cimino's *The Deer Hunter* was based on the conflict in Vietnam rather than on WW2. The gorgeously-lyrical theme *Cavatina* was composed by Stanley Myers.

Among the most familiar pieces of film music ever is the *James Bond* theme, written by Monty Norman in 1962 for *Dr. No* at the beginning of the long series of spy movies and heard in each of them since, it has become a true film theme classic. Several other themes from the series feature in our medley, many written by John Barry. *The Big Country* was a classy 1958 western directed by William Wyler and starring Gregory Peck, Jean Simmons, Charlton Heston and Burl Ives with a superb theme written by Jerome Moross. It vividly captures the feeling of the wide-open western countryside of the story. *The Magnificent Seven* was a great John Sturges Western starring Yul Brynner, Steve McQueen and Charles Bronson with another fine theme, this time from Elmer Bernstein.

Chi Mai (Italian for 'whatever ?') was written in 1971 by Ennio Morricone, since when it has achieved huge popularity with use in a variety of different screen productions. It saw the light of day in the films *Maddalena* (1971) and *Le Professional* (1982), then was used in the UK television series *An Englishman's Castle* and *The Life and Times of David Lloyd George* and it was during the run of the latter in 1981 that *Chi Mai* climbed to number 2 in the UK Singles Chart. Also on the romantic side, Frances Lai's theme for David Hamilton's erotic *Bilitis* is a most beautiful, soft focus, atmospheric melody ideally suited to the cycle of French poems which formed the basis of the movie and complemented the Gallic setting.

The title song from Lerner and Loewe's musical *Gigi* translated marvellously from the Broadway stage to silver screen. The story of the pretty young ingenue Gigi and her romantic exploits was brilliantly cast, with Lesley Caron in the title role, Louis Jourdan as Gaston, Maurice Chevalier as Honoré and Hermione Gingold as Madame Alvarez. The romantic Audrey Hepburn-starring vehicle *Breakfast at Tiffany's* was a feast for the ear as well as the eye with the star's gamine beauty and Henry Mancini's score on the soundtrack, the latter including an attractive theme and the timeless *Moon River* featuring Johnny Mercer's magical lyric.

Probably the best screen adaptation of a Rodgers and Hammerstein stage musical, *Carousel* starred Gordon MacRae and Shirley Jones in the story of a macho, wife-beating fairground barker. The famous waltz was featured prominently as the titles and credits rolled. The Otto Preminger 'film noir' *Laura* was a dark tale of murder and betrayal introduced by a most lovely David Raksin melody to which Johnny Mercer later wrote lyrics. The director had originally planned to use Duke Ellington's *Sophisticated Lady* as the theme, but was persuaded to give Raskin the chance to write an original theme, despite only a weekend to undertake the task. He managed with aplomb, though he did so without actually having seen the movie! The 1980 science fiction romance *Somewhere in Time* has a score by John Barry, but also made extensive use of the well-known 18th variation from Rachmaninov's *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini*. The film starred Christopher Reeve, Jane Seymour and Christopher Plummer.

Tony Watts August 2018

***alto* = a label of Musical Concepts: www.altocd.com**
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ALN 1956 Hollywood's Golden Era Songs: Astaire/ Kelly/ Satchmo/ Garland/ Monroe/ etc
ALN 1923 Mantovani: Music from the Films: Dream of Olwen/Warsaw Concerto
ALN 1934 Movie Magic: Epics & Westerns -19 great themes in DDD/ Carl Davis / RPO
ALN 1938 Poetry Please (38)/legendary voices Burton, Redgrave, Hordern incl War Poets
ALN 1959 Russian Favourites (for choir) ! Don Cossack Choir & Red Army Ensemble
ALN 1964 Broadway Double ! Original South Pacific & Oklahoma on 1 CD
ALN 1926 Je ne Regrette Rien/ La Vie en Rose:Very Best of Edith Piaf including Milord
ALN 1948 Mantovani's Mediterranean Melodies 'Italia Mia' Sorrento, O Sole Mio etc
ALN 1935 Very Best of Bob Newhart
ALN 1936 Balalaika Orchestra Favourites ! / Osipov State Russian
ALN 1940 Jazz for Cocktails III incl Desafinado, My Favourite Things, Maids of Cadiz etc
ALN 1943 Trad Jazz UK / Collector's Album / Colyer / Barber/ Temperance/ Ball / Lightfoot
ALN 1945 Sparky's Magic Piano / BBC radio Kid's Classics (23 original 1950/60's hits)
ALN 1947 Best of Dixieland Jazz: Dutch Swing College Band / Pete Fountain / Al Hirt etc
ALN 1953 Sax with Cocktails / Smooth Jazz with Webster, Getz, Mulligan, Hodges, Parker
ALN 1957 Oscar Peterson Trio plays the American Standards
ALN 1963 Welsh Choir Tradition: Treorchy Male Voice Choir

Movie Music: 20 hits-Space, Action and Romance

London Symphony Orchestra / Stanley Black & his Orchestra*

Conducted by Stanley Black (also: Stanley Black on piano**)

[1]	**Star Wars (Episode 4)** (John Williams)	5:35
[2]	**633 Squadron** (Ron Goodwin)	3:04
[3]	**Thunderbirds** (Barry Gray)	2:53
[4]	**Gigi** (Theme and Thank Heaven) (Frederick Loewe)*	4:16
[5]	**Bridge on the River Kwai** (Kenneth Alford, Malcolm Arnold)*	2:53
[6]	**Breakfast at Tiffany's** (Theme & Moon River) (Henry Mancini)*	3:26
[7]	**Theme from Superman** (John Williams)	4:34
[8]	**The Big Country** (Jerome Moross)	3:08
[9]	**Laura** (Dave Raksin)*/**	4:12
[10]	**Guns of Navarone** (Dmitri Tiomkin)*	2:42
[11]	**Somewhere in Time** (John Barry)*/**	3:57
[12]	**Carousel Waltz** (Rodgers)*	3:08
[13]	**The Magnificent Seven** (Elmer Bernstein)	3:53
[14]	**Bilitis** (Francis Lai)*/**	3:11
[15]	**Raiders of the Lost Ark** (John Williams)	4:23
[16]	**The Deer Hunter** (Stanley Myers)**	2:13
[17]	**The Great Escape** (Elmer Bernstein)*	2:38
[18]	**Chi Mai** / Life & Times of David Lloyd George (Ennio Morricone)*	4:02
[19]	**James Bond Medley** (Main Themes) (Monty Norman, John Barry)	9:05
[20]	**Star Wars Episode 5: The Empire Strikes Back** (John Williams)*	5:13

TOTAL TIME 79:13 DDD recordings

(LSO) Producer: John Boyden; Engineers: Abbey Road Studio except Thunderbirds – Dick Lewzey. (SBCO): Licensed from Dinmore Records

Re-mastered for alto by Paul Arden-Taylor (www.dinmore-records.co.uk)